

spaces below such an [overlying] upper portion of lumber, said median strip being narrower than said lower portion of lumber and thus substantially reducing the area of contact with said upper portion of lumber and permitting airflow to take place along said two side strips and said upper portion of lumber;

said [protector] side walls defining inner surfaces adapted to overlie [for contacting] the sides of said lower portion of lumber ;

10 ribs formed along the inner surfaces of said protector side walls for contacting the sides of said lower portion of lumber and for maintaining the remainder of said inner surfaces of said protector side walls out of contact with said lower portion of lumber whereby to permit air circulation between the inner surfaces of said protector side walls and the sides of said lower portion of lumber.

2. (Amended) A wood rot [protector] preventer as claimed in claim 1 and including ridges formed along the underside of the [protector] web for contacting the upper edge of the lower portion of lumber, the ridges defining planar contact load bearing surfaces for transmitting the load of the upper portion of lumber to the upper edge of the lower portion of lumber, whilst at the same time defining air flow passages between the ridges to permit air flow along the upper edge of the lower portion of lumber.

20 3.(amended) A wood rot [protector] preventer as claimed in claim 2 wherein said protector is formed of resilient thermoplastic material and is dimensioned

whereby said ribs on said side walls make a snug friction fit over the [upper edge] sides of the lower portion of lumber.

4.(amended) A wood rot [protector] preventer as claimed in claim 3 wherein said protector is formed by extrusion techniques so that said protectors can be made in extended lengths, at low cost.

5.(amended) A wood rot [protector] preventer as claimed in claim 1 wherein said protector side walls are formed with a single rib on each side, the ribs having a pointed or hook shape so as to partially bite into the sides of the lumber.

6.(amended) A wood rot [protector] preventer as claimed in claim 5 wherein said side walls have drip edges which are spaced away from contact with the wood thereby causing moisture running down the exterior of the side walls to drip off the side walls clear of the sides of the lumber.

7.(amended) A wood rot [protector] preventer as claimed in [claim in] claim 1 wherein [the inner surface of] the web of the protector is formed with parallel grooves, defining load bearing surfaces between the grooves.

Claims 8 to 13 withdrawn

and add the following new claim.

8/14. A wood rot preventer adapted for use between two intersecting portions of lumber, namely an upper portion of lumber and a lower portion of lumber, said lower portion defining an upper edge and a lower edge, and said upper portions of lumber defining a predetermined load and said load being transmitted to said lower portions of lumber, and comprising;

a elongated protector adapted for attachment over the upper edge of a lower portion of lumber, the protector in turn comprising,

a web for overlying the upper edge of the lower portion of lumber;

side walls for extending partially downward from said web along either side of the lower portion of lumber;

an upper surface of said web defining a central median upper surface strip which is substantially planar and parallel to the upper edge of the lower portion of lumber, and,

two upper surface side strips running along opposite side edges of said central median strip, said side strips having side strip surfaces angled downwardly away from the plane of said median strip, wherein said median strip defines a planar contact area for contact with an upper portion of lumber, and said two side strips define wedge shaped spaces below such an upper portion of lumber, said median strip being narrower than said lower portion of lumber and thus substantially reducing the area of contact with said upper portion of lumber and permitting airflow to take place along said two side strips and said upper portion of lumber.